

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (TEXT PARA 7)

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, NATO

SUBJECT: MBFR: AUG 16 SPC MEETING: BASIC CHARCTER OF ALLIED  
NEGOTIATING POSITION

REF: USNATO 3826

BEGIN SUMMARY. IN FURTHER DISCUSSION OF CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF ALLIED NEGOTIATING APPROACH, CANADA BACKED OFF FROM PROPOSAL, WHICH RECEIVED LITTLE SUPPORT, FOR DRAFTING FALLBACK POSITIONS. HOWEVER, UK ARGUED STRONGLY AGAINST US APPROACH AS TOO "OPEN-ENDED" AND MOST ALLIES CLEARLY FAVORED A RELATIVELY CAUTIOUS "FEELING OUT" PERIOD AT THE OUTSET OF MBFR TALKS BEFORE TABLING A GENERAL PROPOSAL. END SUMMARY.

1. SPC CHAIRMAN (KASTL) RECALLED DISCUSSION AT COMMITTEE'S LAST  
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MEETING ON BASIC CHARACTER OF ALLIED APPROACH (REFTEL) AND INVITED FURTHER EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON THIS FUNDAMENTAL POINT.

2. US REP STATED THAT WE CONSIDER US FRAMEWORK PROPOSAL TO BE A CREDIBLE AND STRONG PROPOSAL, ONE THAT WILL NOT BE EASY TO NEGOTIATE, BUT WHICH CAN BE DEFENDED AGAINST THE EAST AND WITH OUR PUBLIC

OPINION. OUR NEGOTIATORS SHOULD MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO ACHIEVE SOVIET ACCEPTANCE OF THIS FRAMEWORK AND NOT VIEW THIS AS A POSITION FROM WHICH TO QUICKLY RECEDE. THERE IS NO RPT NO NEED AT THE PRESENT TIME TO ATTEMPT TO BEEF UP THIS PROPOSAL WITH NEW SUBSTANTIVE ELEMENTS OR TO PREPARE FALLBACK POSITIONS. THE FORMER COULD CAUSE ALLIED PROPOSALS TO LOSE TOUCH WITH REALITY AND INVITE SOVIET DEMANDS FOR RECIPROCITY; THE LATTER WOULD BE PREMATURE AND POSSIBLY DANGEROUS

HE RECALLED THE FACT THAT THE COUNCIL HAD PROVIDED A SINGLE SET OF MANDATES AND NOT ALTERNATIVE PROPOSALS TO ALLIED NEGOTIATORS FOR USE IN THE CSCE MULTILATERAL PREPARATORY TALKS IN HELSINKI.

3. CANADIAN REP (MARSHALL) SAID THAT IN LIGHT OF THIS HELPFUL CLARIFICATION OF THE US CONCEPTUAL APPROACH, HE COULD ACCEPT US FRAMEOWRK PROPOSAL AS BASIC POSITION AND AGREED THERE WAS NO NEED TO DESIGN FALLBACK POSITIONS AT THIS TIME. GIVEN THE INEVITABLE PROCESS OF EROSION, HOWEVER, HE WAS NOT SURE THAT US PROPOSAL WAS STRONG ENOUGH.

4. FRG (RANTZAU) HOWEVER SAID THAT EFFECT OF US APPROACH WOULD BE TO PROVIDE ALLIED NEGOTIATORS WITH "MINIMAL" PROPOSAL, THEREBY LEAVING THEM WITH NO WHERE TO GO IN THE FACE OF LIKELY SOVIET OPPOSITION. TURKEY (TULUMEN) AGREED AND SUGGESTED THAT THE ALLIES SHOULD START WITH A VERY STRONG OPENING PROPOSAL AND THEN LATER, AFTER RECEIVING SOVIET REACTIONS, DEVELOP A BASIC PROPOSAL WHICH THEY WOULD DEFEND FOR A LONG TIME. CANADIAN REP COULD NOT AGREE WITH RANTZAU'S CHARACTERIZATION OF US PROPOSAL AS "MINIMAL," BUT DID CONSIDER THAT IT MIGHT BE ENRICHED WITH SOME "THROW AWAY" ELEMENTS.

5. UK (THOMSON) ATTACKED THE US APPROACH AT LENGTH. HE AGREED WITH FRG AND TURKEY THAT ALLIES MUST KNOW BOTH WHAT IS ACCEPTABLE --AND TO KNOW THIS THEY ARE STILL AWAITING SACEUR'S ASSESSMENT OF THE US, BELGIAN AND UK PROPOSALS-- AND WHAT IS TACTICALLY DESIRABLE. BELGIAN PROPOSAL SETS CLEAR LIMITS, UK IS DELIBERATELY AMBIGUOUS, BUT US PAPER IS OPEN-ENDED. THE ALLIES KNOW WHERE THEY WILL START  
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BUT NOT WHERE THEY WILL FINISH. ALLIES MUST REALISTICALLY FACE UP TO LIKELIHOOD THAT THE SOVIETS WILL NOT GIVE UP A TANK ARMY, WHICH IS ALL "TEETH," UNLESS THE US INCLUDES NUCLEAR ELEMENTS, INCREASES THE PROPORTION OF COMBAT-CAPABLE ELEMENTS IN ITS REDUCTION COMPONENT, AND INCREASES THE NUMBER OF REDUCTIONS. ALLIES COULD EITHER ACCEPT THESE DEMANDS OR LOWER THEIR DEMANDS ON SOVIETS. RATHER THAN ENDANGERING ALLIED SECURITY, UK WOULD PREFER LATTER ALTERNATIVE.

6. IN THOMSON'S VIEW, ALLIES SHOULD ADJUST THEIR NEGOTIATING APPROACH TO THE PROBABILITY THAT THE SOVIETS WILL NOT NEGOTIATE SERIOUSLY IN THE FIRST MONTHS OF MBFR TALKS, NOT UNTIL THEY KNOW WHAT THEY WILL GET FROM CSCE. ALLIES WOULD BE ON DANGEROUS GROUND IF THEY LAID OUT THEIR PROPOSAL TOO EARLY. UK FAVORS A MUCH MORE GRADUAL APPROACH. ALLIES MIGHT, FOR EXAMPLE, START

WITH A GENERAL PROPOSAL--A "REAL" FRAMEWORK, UNLIKE THE HIGHLY SPECIFIC FRAMEWORK PROPOSAL BY THE US--FOLLOWED PERHAPS BY A HIGHLY INFLATED PROPOSAL. THE SOVIETS ARE LIKELY TO PURSUE TACTICS OF THIS KIND. THE ALLIES MIGHT AS WELL ACCEPT THE FACT THAT THEY ARE IN FOR VERY LONG, TOUGH NEGOTIATIONS AND SHOULD NOT GIVE IN TO SOVIET DEMANDS JUST BECAUSE OF PARLIAMENTARY PRESSURES.

7. BELGIAN REP (WILLOT) PROVIDED HELPFUL REBUTTAL TO SOME OF FRG AND UK ARGUMENTS. US PROPOSAL NEITHER "MINIMAL" NOR MAXIMAL. SINCE US ARGUES THAT INCREASING PROPOSAL MIGHT SACRIFICE ITS CREDIBILITY, IT IS UP TO OTHERS TO PROPOSE ADDITIONAL ELEMENTS, WHICH CAN BE EXAMINED ON THEIR MERITS. IN ANY CASE, THE ALLIES, WHO PROPOSED MBFR TALKS IN THE FIRST PLACE, CANNOT WAIT FOR LONG WITHOUT MAKING PROPOSAL. THE UK'S PROPOSED "VAGUE" APPROACH WILL NOT GIVE THE SOVIETS ANYTHING CONCRETE AGAINST WHICH TO REACT AND WOULD THUS LEAVE ALLIES IN THE DARK AS TO WHAT IS NEGOTIABLE. MORE IMPORTANTLY, UK APPROACH WOULD INVITE A PIECEMEAL AND PERHAPS LARGELY BILATERAL APPROACH. ALLIES WOULD BE BETTER ADVISED TO AGREE TO A FRAMEWORK PROPOSAL AGAINST WHICH THEY CAN TEST SOVIET INTENTIONS. THIS PROPOSAL NEEDS TO BE STRONG, HOWEVER, AND ALLIES MIGHT REINFORCE SOME OF THE WORDING IN THE US PROPOSAL. FOR EXAMPLE, COULD NOT THE US PROPOSAL ON PROTECTION OF COMBAT CAPABILITY USE A STRONGER VERB THAN "WISH." COMMENT: IT WOULD BE HELPFUL TO HAVE SOME ALTERNATIVE LANGUAGE  
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ON THIS POINT.

8. DRAWING ON DETAILED INSTRUCTIONS, FRG REP SIDED WITH UK IN BELIEVING THAT ALLIES SHOULD NOT INTRODUCE A WESTERN PROPOSAL TOO EARLY IN NEGOTIATIONS. BEFORE LAUNCHING A REDUCTION PROPOSAL, THE ALLIES SHOULD ADDRESS FOUR SPECIFIC GROUPS OF SUBJECTS IN NEGOTIATIONS: (1) PROCEDURAL QUESTIONS SUCH AS THE RHYTHM OF WORK, ROLE OF EMISSARIES, ETC; (2) AGENDA, GROUND RULES (I.E., PRINCIPLES); (3) CONCEPT OF A COMMON CEILING; AND (4) PRE-REDUCTION CONSTRAINTS. IN OTHER WORDS, CLARIFICATION OF MAJOR POINTS MUST PRECEDE TABLING OF A GENERAL PROPOSAL. IF ALLIES FOLLOWED US APPROACH, THEY WOULD BE LAYING THEIR CARDS ON THE TABLE PREMATURELY. IT WILL NOT BE POSSIBLE TO KNOW PRECISELY HOW TO PROCEED UNTIL THE ALLIES HAVE FURTHER SOVIET REACTIONS, SINCE THOSE REACTIONS WILL LARGELY DETERMINE SUBSTANCE AND TIMING OF ALLIED PROPOSALS. FRG AGREES, HOWEVER, WITH NEED FOR URGENT DEVELOPMENT OF AN ALLIED POSITION.

9. NETHERLANDS (SIZOO) FAVORED US APPROACH OF GIVING CLEAR MANDATE TO NEGOTIATORS AND ASKING THEM TO DO BEST TO ACHIEVE ITS OBJECTIVES. BASIC GUIDELINES SET PROTECTIVE LIMITS.

10. IN CONCLUDING COMMENTS, CANADA NOTED THAT MANY APPEARED TO AGREE THAT THEY SHOULD CONDUCT A "FEELING OUT" OPERATION EARLY IN MBFR, EITHER THROUGH DISCUSSION OF SOME GENERAL ELEMENTS (FRG

PROPOSAL) OR THROUGH A FRAMEWORK PROPOSAL (US). KASTL ALSO NOTED AGREEMENT AMONG MOST ALLIES THAT, ALTHOUGH WHAT THEY PROPOSE MAY BE SOMEWHAT DIFFERENT FROM WHAT THEY SEEK, THERE IS NO NEED TO DRAFT FALLBACK POSITIONS. ALLIES ALREADY HAVE PROTECTIVE LIMITS IN THE FORM OF THEIR SECRET GUIDELINES.

11 COMMITTEE WILL MEET AUGUST 17 FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION OF US, BELGIAN AND UK SUBSTANTIVE PROPOSALS. US REP DREW UPON STATE 162345 TO RESPOND TO EARLIER ALLIED QUESTIONS.

12. COMMENT: DISCUSSION USEFULLY DEMONSTRATED LACK OF SUPPORT FOR DRAFTING FALLBACK POSITIONS AT THIS STAGE. EXCEPT FOR UK, IT ALSO INDICATED WILLINGNESS TO ADVANCE AT LEAST SOME MAJOR ELEMENTS OF PROPOSAL FAIRLY EARLY IN NEGOTIATIONS. ON THE OTHER HAND, MOST ALLIES CLEARLY FAVOR A CAREFUL FEELING OUT PROCESS AND WOULD PROBABLY BE RELUCTANT TO TABLE THE FULL US FRAMEWORK PROPOSAL ALL AT ONCE IN NEGOTIATIONS. WE WILL CONTINUE TO ARGUE THAT THESE CONS-  
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IDERATIONS FALL LARGELY UNDER THE NEGOTIATING STRATEGY SECTION OF THE SPC MANDATE AND WILL ARGUE FOR EARLY TABLING OF ALLIED PROPOSAL. RUMSFELD

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